

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-10 OMB-01

SAJ-01 NIC-01 /092 W

----- 015045

R 101847Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6445

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ICFTU, UK, PINT

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILE WORKERS CONFERENCE  
(DEC. 9-11); LARGE CONTINGENT FROM SOVIET BLOC

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AN INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILE WORKERS CONFERENCE OPENED YESTERDAY, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE THREE MAJOR AUTOMOBILE UNIONS IN THE TUC, WITH LARGE SCALE PARTICIPATION FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CONSPICUOUS ABSENCE OF SOME OF THE MOST POWERFUL AUTOMOBILE WORKERS UNIONS IN THE ENTIRE WORLD, INCLUDING THOSE FROM THE UNITED STATES, GERMANY, AND SWEDEN. THE CONFERENCE, WHICH IS BEING HELD AT TUC HEADQUARTERS, WAS GIVEN THE BLESSING OF TUC GENERAL SECRETARY LEN MURRAY AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT MICHAEL FOOT, WHO DELIVERED ADDRESSES ON OPENING DAY (DECEMBER 9). ON THE OTHER HAND, PETER WALKER, CONSERVATIVE DEFENSE SPOKESMAN, STRONGLY ATTACKED IT AS A "MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE SPHERE OF THEIR SUBVERSIVE INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES.." END SUMMARY

2. THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE - WHICH ENDS TOMORROW (DECEMBER 11) - IS TO DEAL WITH "WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT IN THE AUTOMOBILE AND ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES." HOWEVER, THE RATHER "LOPSIDED" REPRESENTATION BY SO MANY COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONS FROM EASTERN EUROPE, AS WELL AS SOME FROM WESTERN EUROPE, COUPLED WITH THE DELIBERATE ABSENCE OF MANY IMPORTANT NON-COMMUNIST UNIONS, HAS GIVEN IT A SPECIAL POLITICAL IMPORTANCE AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CREATE VERY SERIOUS STRAINS WITHIN THE POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION, WHICH IS BOYCOTTING THE MEETING, AS WELL AS ENGENDER DEBATE WITHIN THE ICFTU AND THE ETUC - BOTH OF WHICH ARE ABSENT FROM THE CONFERENCE.

3. THE FIRST DAY'S ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFERENCE CENTERED ON OPENING SPEECHES. FOOT LIMITED HIMSELF ESSENTIALLY TO THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONFERENCE AND NOTED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT HIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLANS TO SET UP A WORK RESEARCH UNIT TO "IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE." LEN MURRAY SIMILARLY ESCHEWED ANY SORT OF POLITICAL STATEMENT IN HIS GENERAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE NEED FOR TRADE UNIONS TO COPE WITH MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES. BUT TWO OF THE PRINCIPAL UNION LEADERS INVOLVED, HUGH SCANLON AND JACK JONES, APPARENTLY STUNG BY PETER WALKER'S ATTACK, TOOK THE OCCASION OF THEIR OPENING REMARKS TO DENY HIS ALLEGATIONS. SCANLON

SAID THAT IDEOLOGY WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING AND JONES, WITHOUT MENTIONING WALKER, DECLARED THAT "SOME POLITICIANS OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE SEE SOMETHING A LITTLE SINISTER LOOMING, SOMETHING DISRUPTIVE IN OUR SITTING DOWN TOGETHER WITH TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS." HE ADDED: "WE ARE NOT HERE TO CONVERT EACH OTHER TO SOME POLITICAL OUTLOOK OR IDEOLOGY." A SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE, V. CHOUGONOV, GAVE SUPPORT TO JONES' STATEMENT BY DECLARING THAT HIS DELEGATION HAD NOT COME TO PREACH COMMUNISM.

4. THERE WAS LITTLE PLENARY DISCUSSION OF THE CONFERENCE'S MAIN THEME, BUT A NUMBER OF REPORTS FROM VARIOUS AREAS WERE BEING EXAMINED IN MAINLY PRIVATE GROUP SESSIONS TODAY (DECEMBER 10), AND A GENERAL DEBATE IS EXPECTED TOMORROW TOGETHER WITH ANY RESOLUTIONS THAT ARE DECIDED. (REPORTS, NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS AND LIST OF PARTICIPANTS WILL BE SENT BY AIRGRAM.)

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5. APPROXIMATELY 105 DELEGATES FROM 18 COUNTRIES ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE CONFERENCE. THESE INCLUDE TRADE UNIONISTS FROM AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN, EGYPT, CYPRUS, IRAQ, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, POLAND, RUMANIA, SOVIET UNION, YUGOSLAVIA, DENMARK, FINLAND, FRANCE, ITALY AND GREAT BRITAIN. (IN ADDITION TO THE THREE HOST UNIONS, THE ENGINEERS, THE TRANSPORT WORKERS AND THE SHEETMETAL WORKERS, SEVEN OTHER BRITISH TUC AFFILIATES ARE REPRESENTED). THE WFTU SECRETARIAT AND THE WFTU METALWORKERS INTERNATIONAL SECTION ARE ALSO PARTICIPATING.

6. COMMENT: THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THIS CONFERENCE WILL HAVE IMPORTANT REPERCUSSIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION. HERMAN REBHAN, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE IMF, MADE IT CLEAR TO US WHEN HE WAS HERE LAST WEEK THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF PARTICIPATING IN A CONFERENCE OF THIS KIND OUTSIDE THE IMF STRUCTURE, A DECISION PARALLELED BY THE ICFTU. BUT THE ABSENCE OF SOME OF THE MOST POWERFUL UNIONS IN THE WEST, NOTABLY THE AMERICAN, GERMAN AND SWEDISH AUTO AND METALWORKERS UNIONS UNDERLINED THE EXPOSED POSITION OF THE BRITISH. WHILE HUGH SCANLON'S ENGINEERS CLEARLY WERE THE PRINCIPAL HOSTS

(AUEW OFFICIALS ACTUALLY WERE IN CHARGE OF CONFERENCE PLANNING), JACK JONES APPEARED TO BE SOMEWHAT UNCOMFORTABLE IN HIS ROLE AS ONE OF THE THREE CO-HOSTS. HE PRIVATELY TOLD THE EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE: "I HAD TO GO ALONG WITH IT" (THE CONFERENCE). HE DID NOT MAKE IT CLEAR WHETHER HE HAD JOINED SCANLON BECAUSE OF INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS WITHIN HIS OWN UNION OR BECAUSE HE FEARED LEFT-WING CRITICISM FROM WITHIN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT GENERALLY IF HE STAYED OUT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE THIRD CO-HOST, L.W. BUCK, HEAD OF THE TUC'S SHEET METAL WORKERS, WAS A WILLING PARTNER. HE TOLD US THAT "THIS IS 1974 NOT 1968 -- TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE COMMUNIST UNIONS NOW." (THERE WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOME TUC DISSENTERS. TWO UNIONS WHICH HAVE MEMBERSHIP IN THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY, FRANK CHAPPLE'S ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AND ROY GRANTHAM'S PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE WORKERS, ALSO BOYCOTTED THE CONFERENCE.)

7. OTHER TRADE UNIONISTS, WHO HAVE HAD CLOSE TIES WITH THE US AUTO WORKERS, SUCH AS MOSS EVANS AND GRENVILLE HAWLEY OF THE TRANSPORT WORKERS, WERE AT PAINS TO EMPHASIZE THAT THERE WAS NO INTENTION ON THE PART OF THE SPONSORS OF THE CONFERENCE TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE EVENTUAL DISINTEGRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE PROCESS OF EROSION HAS ALREADY BEGUN, AND THAT THIS PROCESS HAS BEEN CLEARLY AIDED BY THE CONVENING OF THIS CONFERENCE.

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## Message Attributes

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